

# Huffing and Dusting





# The Incident

- Squadron CO informed at 2350 Sunday that E-4 found dead in barracks room at a naval air station.
- Investigation by NCIS and local coroner.
  - Death deemed not a homicide and not suicide, simply accidental.
  - Although cause of death not yet fully determined, evidence of “dusting” combined with excessive alcohol use was apparent.
  - Apparently up to 5 Sailors in victims room did it together early Saturday evening. Victim last seen leaving barracks lounge 0200 Sunday morning.



# Huffing



- Nothing new, method been around for years
- Individual “huffs” inhalant from aerosol type cannisters.
  - Commercially purchased.
  - Easily available and inexpensive.
- Can be:
  - Air freshener
  - Whipped cream
  - Hair spray
  - Spray paint





# Dusting

- Same as huffing, but with specific use of “Dust Off” or related compressed air c
  - Colorless, odorless.
  - Easily accessible, inexpensive
  - Virtually untraceable.





# Who's doing it?



- 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse:
  - 158% increase from 1990 to 1999 (392K to 1mil).
  - Primary users 12-17 year olds.
    - 636,000 of those had used for first time in 1999
    - 18-27 year olds - 276,000 users
  - 17 million have tried in their lifetime.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> most abused substance in US among high- schoolers (behind alcohol, cigarettes and marijuana).
- Texas Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse:
  - Analysis of 144 inhalant abuse deaths b/w 1988-1998 showed average age was 25.6.
  - 42% of deaths were students using freon.



# Effects



- High from the gas gives rapid feeling of euphoria.
- Can result in damage to brain, lungs, heart, kidneys and liver...
  - And, obviously, death, whether a contributor or by itself.
  - Sudden sniffing death (SSD) may result within minutes from irregular heart rhythm leading to heart failure.
  - Suffocation or asphyxiation.
- Users have been known to be paralyzed for 5-10 minutes.
- Not sure how alcohol affects the effects of inhalants...but it certainly can't be good.
- Becomes addictive only because of the attention a user receives from others by doing, showing and supplying it.



# Legal Aspects



- Possession of aerosols/inhalants isn't inherently illegal, but...
- Possible UCMJ offenses.
  - Dereliction of Duty
  - Reckless endangerment
  - Disorderly conduct
- MPM 1910-142, Separation by Reason of Misconduct – Commission of a Serious Offense, Para 2b states:
  - “illicit use of inhalants (huffing) or excessive use (beyond what is normal, sufficient, or prescribed) of prescription and/or over-the-counter drugs and medications.



# References / Links



- [http://navdweb.spawar.navy.mil/fr\\_index.html?/drugsofabuse/inhal/inhalants.asp](http://navdweb.spawar.navy.mil/fr_index.html?/drugsofabuse/inhal/inhalants.asp)
- <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/8714725/>
- <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/8717311>
- <http://www.snopes.com/toxins/dustoff.asp>





# Conclusion



- Typical age of use between 8 & 15, not 29!
- An EP, Blue Jacket of the Year Sailor.
  - It happens to the best.